



CT DEP State Parks Division

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

GUIDANCE FOR RECREATIONAL TRAIL GRANTS

Eligible Projects Proposals must be submitted so that the Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (RTAC) will be able to consider the whole project from beginning to end. Applicants may submit scope of work and budgets that target a phase or phases of the whole project. A “phase” should be a ‘stand-alone’ project that can be utilized successfully independent of the whole project. Please note that the CT RPT annual budget is typically close to 1 million dollars and that the RTAC prefers to fund more than one project annually. Multiple-use projects are encouraged and receive additional points toward ranking. Multiple-use may include foot-travel (hiking, cross country skiing, rollerblading), equestrian, cycling, mountain biking, and motorized uses.

Eligible	Non-Eligible
Construction of new trails may include water trails and construction of trail bridges	Roads, rail roads, sidewalks
Maintenance of existing recreational trails	Law Enforcement
Restoration of existing recreational trails	Upgrading, expanding or otherwise facilitating motorized use or access to trails predominantly used by non-motorized trail users, and on which, as of May 1, 1991, motorized use is either prohibited or has not occurred.
Development and rehabilitation of trail-side and trail-head facilities including drinking water fountains, restroom facilities, safety rails, signs, kiosks, benches, vehicle parking areas, drainage, crossings, stabilization, controls, shelters.	Playing fields; highway rest area or visitor center
Development and rehabilitation trail linkages including urban linkages	Sidewalks
Purchase and lease of dedicated recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment	Pick-up trucks, snowmobiles
Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors	Condemnation of any kind of interest in property
Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility (UTAP)	
Provision of features which facilitate the access and use of trails by persons with disabilities	
Design, engineering and environmental compliance study costs of up to 10% of the grant award	Planning/feasibility studies
Educational programs. For further details see Funding Level Targets below.	Training related to club or organizational development or grant-writing skills
RTP funds may be used to match other Federal funds	

Funding Level Targets

- **Small projects** - No more than 20% of available funds will be spent on projects with total cost less than \$5,000.00.
- **Educational Projects** – No more than 5% of available funds will be spent on projects that develop and disseminate publications and operate educational programs to promote trail safety (*supporting non-law enforcement trail safety/use monitoring patrol programs*) and environmental protection. Examples include:
 - Training on trail accessibility and sustainability and/or that promotes safety or environmental protection related to recreational trails.
 - Programs that develop or support trail planning, design, construction, maintenance, operation, and assessment, because these steps relate to safety and environmental protection.

Funding Level Targets (continued)

- Materials including: informational displays, kiosks, signage, fact sheets, video, audio, interactive computer displays, maps, etc. Please note that a trail system map generally is not an education project. However, if one side of a map is dedicated to trail safety and/or environmental protection education, then educational funds may participate in half of the cost of the map.
 - Trail patrols to monitor and/or educate trail users on trail use, safety, conditions, and/or environmental impacts; and/or provide trailside assistance such as emergency aid, search and rescue, helping trail users repair equipment, etc. Grantees are encouraged to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with qualified youth conservation or service corps to develop and provide training and to work in trail patrols.
- **Motorized Projects** – Nationally, 30% of RTP funds are to be used for motorized recreation, however Because CT has a total land area of less than 3,500,000 acres CT is exempt from this requirement. Nevertheless, in an effort to be consistent with the needs identified in our [State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan](#) CT's Recreational Trails Advisory Committee encourages and will support proposals related to motorized uses and meeting other RTP requirements

Contractual Information to Consider

- 1) The FHWA Funds for this grant round will not be released until fall of 2008. All awardees will need to enter into contract agreements with DEP to receive the grants. Given the length of time it takes to process the contracts, projects will probably not be able to start until spring of 2009. **Please remember that DEP does not reimburse for any work done prior to approval of the grant and the full execution of the grant contract.** Keep a record of certain in-kind services performed up to 18 months prior to grant award, specifically pre-approval project planning and environmental compliance costs to be credited toward your 20% match (non-Federal share) of the cost of a project, The costs incurred must be costs that would be allowable if the project had been approved. This provision helps project sponsors cover significant up-front costs incurred prior to project approval. The 18 month limit is intended to assure that planning and environmental documentation are still valid.
- 2) Prior to all final payments on the grants, applicants must contact the DEP to let them know that the project is complete and to arrange for a site visit.
- 3) All projects must display signage, with wording and graphics to be provided by the DEP, acknowledging the Recreational Trails Program funding. Brochures or educational materials must carry similar wording and must be pre-reviewed by DEP prior to publication.

Grant Selection Procedure

DEP Trails Committee reviews any project proposed on state property. DEP staff and the RTAC will review applications by the end of September and forward them to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for final action. Final decisions on grant awards should be available the following winter.

[The Recreational Trails Advisory Committee](#) is required by FHWA and is made up of representatives from the various recreational disciplines, including horses, street and mountain bikes, hikers, town parks and recreation programs, motorcycles and snowmobiles.

All proposals are reviewed by DEP staff and given a preliminary score according to the tables below. The final selection of proposals is based upon the scores, considerations discussed by the RTAC and the amount of funds available.

Educational Project (max points attainable 35)

Point Value	Project Attribute
15	Statewide audience
10	or Regional audience
8	or Local audience
5	Public/non-profit Involvement in outreach and maintenance of program
5	Public/non-profit Endorsement and Involvement in creation of program
5	Need demonstrated
5	Effectiveness will be demonstrated

New Trail Development, Renovation or Maintenance (max points attainable 322)

Point Value	Project Attribute
15	This is a project that is noted in DEP's Recreational Trails Plan
15	This project connects to and extends trail(s) on state owned land.
10	This project is included in a local and/or regional plan. Provide copies of relevant excerpts.
10	This project is located in more than one town or provides a link to one or more towns.
15	This is the Next Phase of a project previously completed and funded by DEP's RTP.
5	This project is part of an alternative transportation plan (bike ped, etc)
15	This project is part of a CT Greenways Council designated greenway.
5	This project is the first of a kind or in the area.
5	This project is receiving funding from other State or Federal agencies.
5	This project incorporates a Safe Routes to School program
5	This project serves an urbanized area
5	Includes an educational element
10	Pedestrian Use (hiking, running, xc skiing, snowshoe) (scoring Based upon SCORP)
8	Biking (scoring Based upon SCORP)
6	Motorized Use (scoring Based upon SCORP)
8	Equestrian Use (scoring Based upon SCORP)
5	Other Use
15	Adequate Maintenance Plan
15	Statewide support demonstrated through letters
10	Regional support demonstrated through letters
5	Local support demonstrated through letters
10	Public meetings held regarding trail development or land acquisition
10	Sponsorship from local or regional group, agency or organization